



Plantar Fasciitis, Heel Spurs, Heel Pain

The Plantar Fasciitis Organization is dedicated to the understanding of **Plantar Fasciitis**, **Heel Spurs**, and all other forms of **Heel Pain**.

Welcome to the Plantar Fasciitis organization, your source for information on **plantar fasciitis**, **heel spurs**, and other forms of **heel pain**. Our goal is to provide a wealth of information on heel pain conditions and injuries as well as their treatments. [Heel pain](#) affects nearly 2 million Americans each year and can be responsible for mild discomfort or even debilitating pain. Due to the volume of heel pain cases each year, there are many sources for information on heel pain and related treatments available. However, not all of these sources, whether they are on the internet or elsewhere, provide the results that heel pain sufferers desire. Plantar-Fasciitis.org is a unique resource in that it provides ample information and unbiased reviews of treatments, while also offering a forum to allow searchers to discuss their problems and experiences. The most common forms of heel pain are plantar fasciitis and heel spurs and you can find information on those ailments, as well as many others, here at Plantar-Fasciitis.org.

*If you are in serious pain and are only looking for a treatment, we recommend seeing the Treatment Section.



Plantar Fasciitis — [plantar Fasciitis](#) is the most common condition of heel pain. This condition occurs when the long fibrous plantar fascia ligament along the bottom of the foot develops tears in the tissue resulting in pain and inflammation. The pain of plantar fasciitis is usually located close to where the fascia attaches to the calcaneous, also known as the heel bone. The condition is often misspelled as: plantar fascitis, plantar fasciatis, planters fasciitis, plantar faciatis, and plantar faciatis. Correctly pronounced it is "plantar fash-eee-eye-tiss".

Plantar fasciitis causes the inflammation of the plantar fascia ligament which runs along the bottom of the foot. The plantar fascia ligament is made of fibrous bands of tissue and runs between the heel bone and your toes and stretches with every step. Inflammation develops when tears occur in the tissue.

The most common complaint from plantar fasciitis is a burning, stabbing, or aching pain in the heel of the foot. Most sufferers will be able to feel it in the morning because the fascia ligament tightens up during the night while we sleep, causing pain to diminish. However, when we climb out of bed and place pressure on the ligament, it becomes taut and pain is particularly acute. Pain usually decreases as the tissue warms up, but may easily return again after long periods of standing or weight bearing, physical activity, or after getting up after long periods of lethargy or sitting down.

In most cases, plantar fasciitis does not require surgery or invasive procedures to stop pain and reverse damage. Conservative treatments are usually all that is required. However, every person's body responds to plantar fasciitis treatment differently and recovery times may vary.

There are a number of plantar fasciitis causes. The plantar fascia ligament is like a rubber band and loosens and contracts with movement. It also absorbs significant weight and pressure. Because of this function, plantar fasciitis can easily occur from a number of reasons. Among the most common is an overload of physical activity or exercise. Athletes are particularly prone to plantar fasciitis and commonly suffer from it. Excessive running, jumping, or other activities can easily place repetitive or excessive stress on the tissue and lead to tears and inflammation, resulting in moderate to severe pain. Athletes who change or increase the difficulty of their exercise routines are also prone to overdoing it and causing damage.

Another common cause of plantar fasciitis is arthritis. Certain types of arthritis can cause inflammation to develop in tendons, resulting in plantar fasciitis. This cause is particularly common among elderly patients. Diabetes is also a factor that can contribute to further heel pain and damage, particularly among the elderly.

Among the most popular factors that contribute to plantar fasciitis is wearing incorrect shoes. In many cases, shoes either do not fit properly, or provide inadequate support or cushioning. While walking or exercising in improper shoes, weight distribution becomes impaired, and significantly stress can be added to the plantar fascia ligament.

Plantar fasciitis is also influenced by the mechanics of the foot. Having conditions such as flat feet, high arches, pronation, or having an abnormal gait (the way in which the foot hits the ground), the fascia tissue can become overworked or stretched abnormally, resulting in tears and inflammation.

With so many causes of plantar fasciitis, there are many risk factors that sufferers should be aware of. Needless to say, activity in sports and regular exercises can place significant stress on the heel and surrounding tissue. In addition, if you have high arches or flat feet, an orthotic shoe insert should be considered to counteract the stress caused by the abnormal mechanics of the foot. Age also plays a factor. As we age, tissue tends to become weaker and more prone to damage. In addition to these common risk factors, weight plays a huge role in damage to the heel. Since our heels absorb much of our body's pressure when we walk, being overweight can easily lead to damage and plantar fasciitis. Pregnancy can also add a few extra pounds. However, the hormonal changes in pregnant women can also cause ligaments and other tissue to relax and become more pliable, which could lead to plantar fasciitis if you are not careful. Those who are on their feet all day due to their occupation are also at risk. Finally, wearing high heeled shoes, boots, or other shoes that do not provide proper support around the heel and through the arch can easily lead to plantar fasciitis over time.

In many instances, plantar fasciitis can be treated with home care. Changing your physical activities, resting the foot, and applying ice to the area are common remedies. Taking over the counter medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen can help reduce pain and inflammation that may have developed. An orthotic device placed in your shoes can also significantly help to reduce pain. In addition, orthotics can also help promote healing to reverse plantar fasciitis.

If pain from plantar fasciitis continues despite conservative treatments, you may need to visit a doctor or podiatrist. It's important to seek medical advice before heel pain and damage becomes worse. If the condition is allowed to worsen, more serious or invasive forms of treatment may be required to stop pain. A visit to a doctor may reveal other conditions affecting the foot as well, such as Achilles tendonitis, heel spurs, or other heel pain conditions. An x-ray may also be taken, which can reveal the presence of a heel spur. In rare cases surgery may be required to release tension on the plantar fascia, or to remove a portion of a heel spur. But again, most heel pain conditions can be resolved using conservative treatment.

Again, prolonging treatment for plantar fasciitis will cause the condition to become worse. In some cases, a mild aching can evolve into a chronic problem. Another common problem is a change in your gait in order to counteract pain during movement. As a result of these involuntary changes in the foot's mechanics, knee, hip, or back pain can also develop.

Treatment for plantar fasciitis should begin with rest, icing, and over the counter medications. As mentioned above, an orthotic is a device that can be slipped into any pair of shoes and can often relieve pain and help to reverse the damage and occurrence of plantar fasciitis. They do this by adding support to the heel and helping to distribute weight during movement. In addition to orthotics, many people consider night splints for treating this condition. These devices are worn during the night while you sleep, helping to keep the plantar fascia stretched to promote healing. Physical therapy has also become a common option. With this conservative treatment alternative, a physical therapist designs a set of exercises that are intended to address your specific needs in order to promote healing.

More invasive procedures to treat plantar fasciitis are usually sought only after other treatment has failed to produce favorable results. Corticosteroid injections deliver medicine into the injured fascia to reduce pain. However, this treatment may weaken the plantar fascia and result in further damage. In addition, extracorporeal shock wave therapy (ESWT) is a treatment where sound waves are sent through the damaged tissue in order to stimulate the damaged tissue and encourage healing. This method is relatively new in treating plantar fasciitis and your doctor will be able to tell you if it is the right method for you. Lastly, surgery is the last option for those suffering from chronic or severe plantar fasciitis.

Preventing plantar fasciitis is crucial. There are many choices to help prevent the occurrence of this condition, and keep it from returning. One of the most important is maintaining a healthy weight in order to reduce tension on the plantar fascia. In addition, shoes are very important, and should fit well and provide ample cushioning and support throughout the heel, arch, and ball of the foot so that weight is distributed evenly throughout the foot. Try to avoid walking barefoot on hard surfaces and replace old shoes before they wear out, especially shoes that you run or exercise in. When exercising, start off slow and ease into new routines to prevent sudden or excessive stress on tissue. Lastly, keep your calf muscles and the tissue of your feet stretched. Greater flexibility in the tissue makes them less susceptible to damage.

Heel Spurs — A [heel spur](#) is a pointed bony fragment that stems from the heel bone. It extends into the sensitive tissue and nerves, resulting in pain in the foot with

every movement. Pain is usually more pronounced in the morning and subsides through the day, but can return again later on or with activity.

As already mentioned, a heel spur is a common condition that results when a bone growth extends from the heel bone (calcaneous) into the sensitive tissue in the heel. These pointed growths of bone develop when the plantar fascia is excessively and repetitively pulled away from the heel bone. In many cases, a heel spur can develop along with plantar fasciitis, but can also occur by itself.

X-ray scans can usually reveal heel spurs. They show up as hooked growths that point towards the toes. Heel spurs often develop in middle-aged patients, but can also occur in younger people as well. Athletes are especially prone to heel spur due to the regular stress on their heels.

Abnormal gait or pronation is also a factor in the development of heel spurs. If the foot regularly hits the ground in unusual ways, damage can occur since tissue becomes stretched or stress excessively. The stress, therefore, can easily promote the development of calcium where the plantar fascia attaches to the heel bone, causing the formation of a heel spur.

As with other types of heel pain, a heel spur can be treated with conservative treatment methods. Discomfort can be reduced through anti-inflammatory medications, as well as cortisone injections. However, these methods may have varying effects. Orthotics are among the most common types of heel pain treatments, and they are also highly effective in reducing the pain and discomfort of a heel spur. Stretching the tissue throughout the foot and calf can also help to reduce strain and promote healing the area. In most cases, heel spurs can be treated with simple methods. If more conservative methods fail to produce positive, lasting results, surgery may be considered to remove the spur or to release tension on the plantar fascia to stop further damage.

Heel Pain — [Heel pain](#) is a very common complaint, experienced by millions of Americans each year. The most common form of heel pain is derived from plantar fasciitis, the inflammation of the plantar fascia ligament. A condition that commonly develops along with plantar fasciitis, but can form independently as well, is a spur that forms on the bottom of the heel bone. Click for additional reading on Heel Pain.

But with so much stress being place on our heels every day, not to mention poor habits, such as sedentary lifestyles, its no wonder why two thirds of the population have some type of foot condition. Most commonly, however, are conditions that generate heel pain. The most common heel pain condition, as already mentioned, is plantar fasciitis. In addition, many people also suffer from heel spurs, Achilles tendonitis, or other ailments. Heel pain conditions can develop independently or in combination with other conditions. Although they may generate only slight discomfort, they can worsen and generate severe pain over time. In most cases, luckily, treatment only needs to be through conservative methods. Often, heel pain sufferers try to ignore initial pain and other signs of damage. But ignoring the problem only makes it worse, and it's important to seek help and treatment as soon as possible to prevent further damage.

There are many heel pain causes. If you are experiencing heel pain there may be many conditions that are responsible for the discomfort. If you decide to visit a physician, let them know the exact type of heel pain you are experiencing. Your doctor will be looking for physical signs such as tenderness or swelling in order to determine the specific heel pain ailment. An x-ray may be ordered in order to determine the presence of a heel spur, or to rule out other possibilities such as a fracture.

Heel pain located directly below the heel or along the bottom of the foot is often due to either plantar fasciitis or a heel spur. Plantar fasciitis, as discussed above, occurs when tears and inflammation develop along the plantar fascia ligament. In addition, a heel spur is a bony growth that extends from the heel bone and causes pain as it digs into sensitive tissue in the heel.

If heel pain can be felt behind the heel, most likely the discomfort is a sign of Achilles tendonitis. Achilles tendonitis, like plantar fasciitis, results in tears and inflammation, but occurs in the Achilles tendon which runs vertically from the heel along the ankle. Swelling or redness may develop in this area over time and it may be warm on contact.

Conservative treatment for heel pain is usually the most successful. Initial treatment may include rest, applying ice, taking over the counter anti-inflammatory medications, and stretching the area regularly. Orthotic shoe inserts and night splints are also very common conservative devices which help to promote healing and reverse damage. Surgery, in most cases, is not required to treat heel pain. However, if treatment is not sought early enough, damage can progress, requiring more serious forms of treatment.

Treatments & Product Reviews:

The traditional remedies for plantar fasciitis include stretching the calf, massaging, decreasing one's training, losing weight, purchasing better-fitting shoes (with a raised heel and arch support), icing the sore heel, and taking ibuprofen.